



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS
Washington, D.C. 20231
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/474,359	12/29/1999	JEFF C. MORRISS	INTL-0294-US	2154

7590 05/08/2002

TIMOTHY N TROP
TROP PRUNER HU & MILES PC
8554 KATY FREEWAY STE 100
HOUSTON, TX 77024

[REDACTED] EXAMINER

KIM, KEVIN

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2634	

DATE MAILED: 05/08/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Ne

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/474,359	MORRISS, JEFF C. <i>NK</i>
	Examiner Kevin Y Kim	Art Unit 2634

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 11 March 2002.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-19 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 1-6 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 7-15, 18 and 19 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) 16 and 17 is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on 29 December 1999 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.
 If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
 a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____ |
| 2) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claims 7-12 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 7 is confusing because of the seemingly grammatically incorrect phrase “in response to a strobe signal and for each data bit signal.” It appears that the word “for” should be deleted. “the data bit signal” and “the data bit signals” lack antecedent basis.

In claim 8, “the associated data bit signal” lacks antecedent basis. It is suspected that the limitation of claim 19, when read in combination with claim 13, is not understood. Note that, in claim 3, [a] pulse train signal is generated by using “a data bit signal and a first strobe signal” and yet, in claim 19, the same signal appears to be generated when “the data signals” (which lacks a positive antecedent basis) are caused to indicate “a predetermined data pattern.” This claims is examined as best understood by Examiner as set forth below.

Claims 9-12 are rejected for their dependence on the rejected base claims.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Art Unit: 2634

4. Claims 7-10, 13-15, 18 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tamura et al.in view of Dara (USP 5,184,350).

Consider claims 7,8,13,15 and 18. Referring to Figs. 11 and 14, Tamura et al discloses a data receiver comprising data buffers (541 –543), “a first circuit” (5301) generating a skew-indicating signal between data and strobe and “a second circuit” (5302,5304) for latching data into the buffers. Regarding claim 9 reciting a delay chain and multiplexing circuitry, see the delay chains (5302, 5304) and col.19, ll.16-20. Regarding claims 10 and 19, data in the latches are known to selected as needed by using a multiplexer or equivalents thereof. Although Tamura et al is silent on the characteristics of the control signal indicating the skew between the data and clock signals, the use of a pulse train whose duty cycle indicating the phase difference between two signals is well known in the art as evidenced by Dara, see col.12, ll.21-27 and thus would have been obvious to one skilled in the art in the implementation of the Tamura et al's phase comparator. Regarding claims 14 the use of an up/down counter, that stores “a calibration value” indicative of phase difference between two signals in a phase comparator is well known in the art and would have been an obvious alternative.

Allowable Subject Matter

5. Claims 16 and 17 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Art Unit: 2634

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Kevin Y Kim whose telephone number is 703-305-4082. The examiner can normally be reached on 8AM --5PM M-F.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Stephen Chin can be reached on 703-305-4714. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-872-9314 for regular communications and 703-872-9314 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-305-3900.

kvk
April 24, 2002



STEPHEN CHIN
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2600